



View from Yellowwood over du Toit's Kloof with Willem Le Roux March 2011:Photo C Edelstein

YELLOWWOOD CRACK 150m 14 **

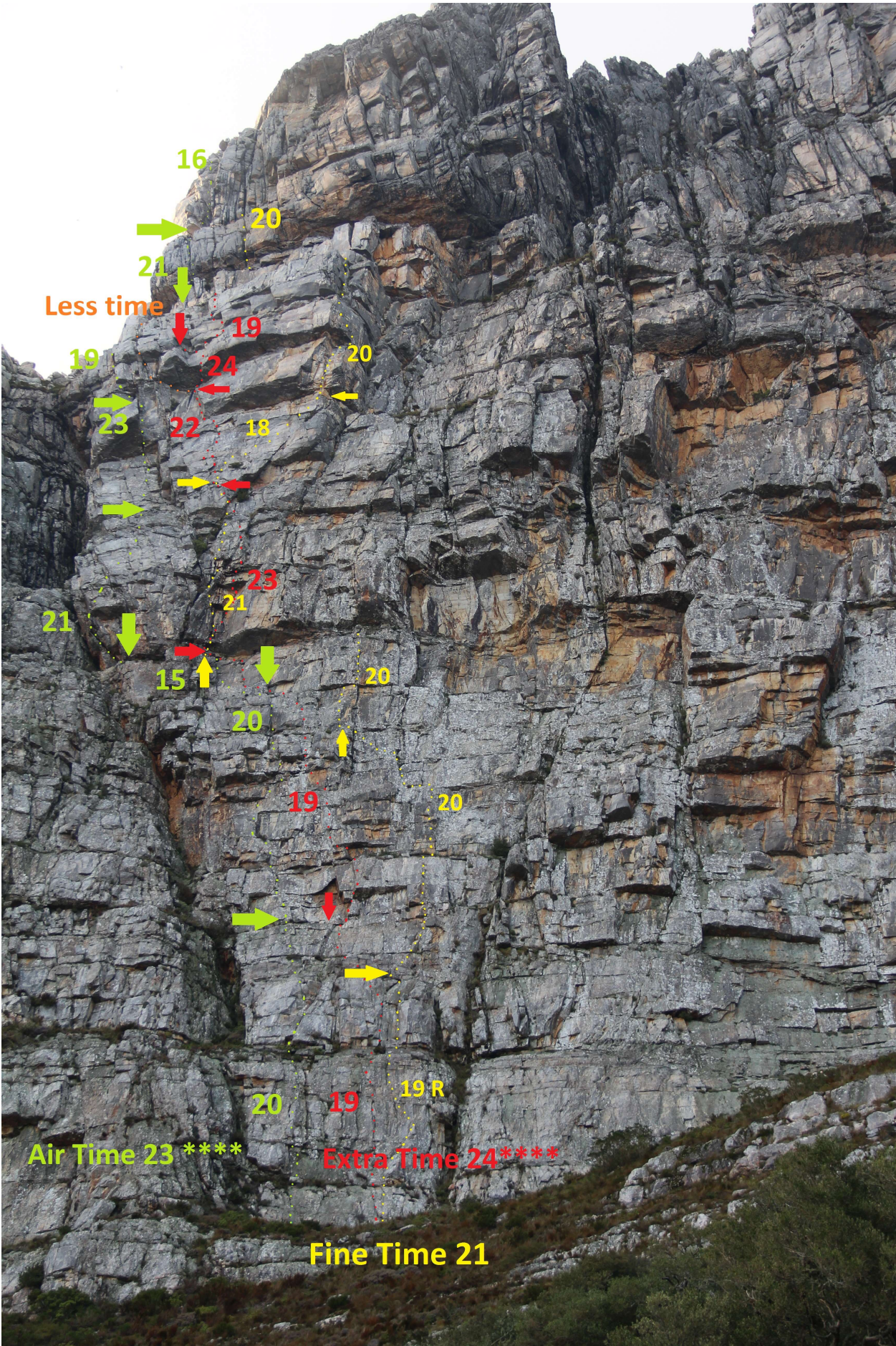
Start: Although the description below suggests starting at the base of the actual gulley it is better with cleaner rock to start left of the gulley on the rib.

Yellowwood crack is user friendly and the easiest way to get to the top of the amphitheatre. It can be climbed by beginners led by an experienced climber. Helmets are essential. The route can be climbed in about 5 pitches. The first pitch is conventional easy "D" climbing. Getting through the next blocky overhangs is a bit tricky. But thereafter climbing the left rib is good clean easy rock. It can be very wet in winter.

(13) **Yellowwood Crack** is the right-hand member of two parallel cracks that form the only obvious line of weakness on the left-hand side of the 500-foot amphitheatre guarding the top of Yellowwood Ravine. There is a loose, dirty face at the bottom. The remaining pitches, nine in number, are attractive enough to make up for it and lie either in the crack, or on the rib to its left. The standard is good 'D'.

R. F. Davies and I climbed it in December, 1959, taking about 7 hours from the road.

Air Time, Extra Time and Fine Time photo topo



AIR TIME 235m 23 ****

This route is just right of Yellowwood Crack and the outstanding feature is the large overhang on the 5th pitch. The overhang is climbed with nothing less than perfect hand jams and is well protected with cams.

Pitch 1: 45m 20. Start at the small cairn and scramble 5 metres to the overlap. Step up onto the cantilevered block and place a bomber green alien. Balance up the rail and move left to climb up the face. Continue up the more or less obvious line to stance just left of **Extra Time**.

Pitch 2: 45m 20. Climb up over dodgy flakes to a rail. Step left and climb up easily for a few meters. Place a good cam or two and do a crank up to a sloping hold and move left and up to the overhang. Climb diagonally up to the right to below another overhang. Rail under this on dodgy shattered rock to exit on the left. (**Extra Time** exits it on the right.) Climb the reachy dihedral to a stance.

Pitch 3: 20m 15. Walk left and climb the easy right facing corner to a ledge. Walk left past the starts of **Fine Time** and **Extra Time** 3rd pitches and then continue left to a stance in a cave by crouching along a narrow ledge.

Pitch 4: 30m 21. Climb up the left slanting chimney crack (good pro) until you are able to swing round onto the face. Climb bold moves up and right to the arete. There is a spike of rock on which you can place a sling for pro. Climb easily up the face to a decent ledge and stance.

Pitch 5: 25m 23. Climb easily up to the overhang and place some good cams. (Bear in mind that your second will curse you if you place them too deep!) Turn the overhang on perfect hand jams. Place a small cam on the right to keep the ropes from jamming in the crack at the lip. Continue up the corner to a large sloping stance.

Pitch 6: 25m 19. Step left and climb an impeccable recess to the "walk-off" ledge.

Pitch 7: 30m 21. Climb up onto the blocks on the right and with an awkward start climb the cracks to a ledge. Place a large cam and turn the overhang with a reach crank. Continue easily to the large ledge system.

Pitch 8: 45m 16.

Climb the grey weather rib just to the right of the gully until one can step across to the left wall. Continue on easy weathered grips to the top.

FA: C Edelstein, D Steyn, M Versfeld and W Le Roux January 2016.

EXTRA TIME 24 160m *****

with the option of "A Little Less Time" (22).

After the spectacular "find" of **Divine Time**, Deon Van Zyl aka "Snoekie" aka "Lulu" and I ventured back to Yellowwood and assembled – partly at least – another route that simply smacked of "classic" last week Wednesday in 36 C heat. (It was 30 C when we got to the car at 19h15 that day.) This is after Tini Versfeld and I contrived "**Fine Time**" (20) a week or so before. Yesterday, in near perfect conditions, we returned, but I had promised my pal Willis who has stiff arthritic hips and battles on eighteens to haul him up "**Divine Time**" and my plan was to send up Lulu with Squeaks to play on the overhang on the last pitch of this new route.

Deon in his wisdom/stupidity decided to trade my place with his and Squeaks and I went ahead to “finesse” the route which at this stage I thought would warrant the name “One More Time”. We had used the first pitch on ***Fine Time*** and I had yet to free on lead the dihedral on the 4th pitch as it was vegetated a week ago.

And then there was the overhang!

As a pre-amble Lulu and I went to the Ledge on Tuesday, the day before and climbed “Tweedle Dee” ostensibly grade 22. This crux pitch I have always found to be at my limit and pretty damn close for me to climbing Africa Arête (25). So I thought this would be a good “calibration” for me. It is of course – at my age – and Tony Dick would verify this, a fuckn’ stupid plan to climb a route at your limit and then without resting up, head off to “finesse” an even harder route the very next day!

So there we were. I fashioned an excellent first pitch separate from ***Fine Time*** which does not really have a move harder than 18/19 but is graded 20 because it is so busy and complex. The second pitch Squeaks modified on lead and I improved it on top rope further. The third pitch was also improved a little by climbing a bit right of the gulley in the upper section on steep brilliant crystalline grey rock. And I combined the face and flashed the classic dihedral on the 4th pitch to belay under the roof.

Adam Roff on the classic dihedral pitch
22. Photo: C Edelstein 2014

I “graciously” then handed the sharp end to the “youth” who proceeded forth and went dangling out at the end of the overhang just to find the perfect sequence to crank through on bomb-proof gear.

So the beta is crank out to the lip, place the obvious cams. Reach right to a jug, reach the left hand up to the finger crack with left foot heel hooked under the roof if you are tall, - I mean less short. Or, cut free and heel hook in the slot if you are shorter or less tall. Follow the left hand now in the crack with right hand and lay back as it gets better and better.



The top pitch is just as problem solving as the rest of the route but really, also only 19.

This is a classic and like “Divine Time” really worth doing. If you can claim to climb grade 24 on sport or even 23 it is really worth playing on as the pro is so good. And I mean everywhere! It is so well protected that you can almost consider it a sport route on trad aka Sprad route. Having said that it is still at Yellowwood with all that makes it steep and intimidating if you are a newbie or wannabe there.

Start: View the topo on the photograph. The start is marked with a cairn.

Pitch 1: (19) 50m Climb the crack just left of Fine Time to a ledge system and then continue up left up the parallel cracks to a ledge system. Move a few metres left and climb the easy right facing corner to stance on large blocks below the huge recess above.

Pitch 2: (19) 50m Climb the short orange/red corner on the right carefully to place good gear and continue straight up 4 or 5m. Step left to above your belay and climb the white-grey recess to a ledge. Move a little left and diagonal across a small orange face and climb carefully past the blocks and dodgy looking flake. Lay-backing works well here and there is a slot up right for your right hand. That way you can completely avoid using the flake. Continue up to a ledge and continue straight up the next groove to the next large ledge. Walk left past the large blocks and climb up to the dassie ledge. There are various options to reach this ledge. The straighter version is more like 20 or you can walk further left to an easy corner.

Pitch 3: (23) 35m As for ***Fine Time***, crank into the recess and climb up tending right. Stem up the short right facing corner and then straight through the overhangs. Tend up left to share a stance with ***Fine Time***.

(The original route climbed the grotty looking recess at grade 21. Step up and place the gold Camelot or equivalent. Straddle carefully for 3/4m to find gear. Do not continue up right up the recess but step left into the steep left facing corner and continue up to easier rock to stand on a grey pillar on the right. Place good gear high up and lay-back steeply (21ish) up to the right to a ledge shared with ***Fine Time***.

Pitch 4: (22) 30m Climb up the grey face first a bit left and then tending slightly right. At the rail move left to below the obvious left facing dihedral. Climb this and belay below the roof in a semi-hanging stance under the roof. Shady if the sun has got to you.

Pitch 5: There are two options:

(19) 30m ***"Less Time"***. Rail left and climb the recess to easier rock to the top.

(23/4) 12m ***"Extra Time"***. Rail out right and crank through the roof and continue up a few metres to a semi-hanging stance. (Do not combine with the next pitch.)

Pitch 6: (19) 22m. Move right and climb the left facing corner. Move back left and find your way to the top.



Snort on the crux 24 pitch. Photo Adam Roff 2014

FA Less Time: C Edelstein, Deon Van Zyl February 2014 except Pitch 1

FA Extra Time including pitch 1: C Edelstein and Richard Halsey 12 March 2014

FFA Extra Time C Edelstein and Willem Le Roux 15 March 2014

Descent. Traverse horizontally above YW crack and along the top of the ***Tea Time*** and ***Divine Time Buttresses*** to the ***Timerity Abseil***



Willem Le Roux on the 1st pitch of Extra Time. Photo: C Edelstein 2014



Johann Lanz belaying Snort on the 2nd^t pitch of Extra Time. Photo: Adam Roff 2014



Tini starting up the 4th pitch of "Extra Time". Photo C Edelstein



Johann Lanz cranking through the crux on Extra Time. Photo: Adam Roff 2014



Tony Dick on the final pitch of Extra Time. Photo: C Edelstein 2015

FINE TIME 21 200m ****+

Start: View the topo on the photograph. The route starts on the right of the "Extra Time" buttress.

Pitch 1: (19 R) 40m Climb easily up the ramp and find some "not so good gear" placements. Step up onto the face and do a tricky move up and slightly left. Climb more easily to a ledge (often a little damp). Climb the crack in the short left facing corner to a good ledge.

Pitch 2: (20) 40m Climb up rightwards past the triangular overhang to a ledge. Climb the steep face above (or the grey face right of the corner which is not as clean) to a narrow ledge. Move a few metres left and then climb the right facing corner and continue up to a good ledge.

Pitch 3. (20) 20m Climb up the face to under the thin overhang and pull through on the right into a steep crack. Climb to the "dassie" ledge.

Pitch 4: (21) 25m. Crank into the recess and climb up the left side and pass the overhangs on the left. (**Extra Time** climbs the right side - harder - and then straight through the overhangs). Move past the bush on the left to join the stance on **Extra Time** on a small but good ledge.

The original version climbed the grotty recess on the left (19).

Pitch 5: (18) 15m This and the next pitch can be combined. Climb up right on the clean grey face and head across the exposed face to below an overhanging crack.

Pitch 6: (20) 30m Climb the overhanging crack and turn the overhang on its right. Climb diagonally left to the arete. Climb this and then finish up the corner to the walk-off ledge.

Pitch 7: (20) Climb up the supporting pillars to the bulging overhang and crank through on funky moves to easier ground. Continue to a ledge. (You can walk off left from here.)

Pitch 8. (In progress – high wind thwarted Jimbo and Snort from completing the last pitch)

Descent: Walk horizontally left for about 150m along ledge systems all the way to the [Timerity Abseil](#).

FA: C Edelstein and Tine Versfeld 23 February 2014. Assistance on improving the route by Adam Roff and Johan Lanz

FA: Pitch 7: C Edelstein and Jimbo Smith 2016